Scriptural Chriſtianity.

A

SERMON

Preached *Auguſt* 24, 1744.

at St. Mary's Church in OXFORD,

BEFORE THE

UNIVERSITY.

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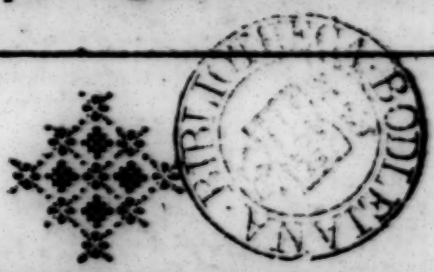
Whoſoever heareth the Sound of the Trumpet, and taketh not Warning, if the Sword come and take him away, his Blood ſhall be upon his own Head. Ezek. xxxiii. 4.



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To the READER.

IT was not my design when I wrote, ever to print the latter Part of the following Sermon. But the false and scurrilous Accounts of it which have been published, almost in every Corner of the Nation, constrain me to publish the Whole, just as it was preached, that Men of Reason may judge for themselves.

October 20, 1744. JOHN WESLEY.

And they were all filled with the HOLY GHOST,

1. THE ſame Expreſſion occurs in the ſecond Chapter, where we read, *When the day of Pentecoſt was fully come, they were all* (the Apoſtles, with the women and the mother of Jeſus, and his brethren) *with one accord in one place. And ſuddenly there came a ſound from heaven, as of a ruſhing mighty wind. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of a fire, and it ſat upon each of them. And they were filled with the* Holy Ghoſt [1]. One immediate effect whereof was, *They began to ſpeak with other tongues.* [2] Inſomuch that both the *Parthians, Medes, Elamites,* and the other Strangers who *came together, when this was noiſed abroad, heard them ſpeak, in* their ſeveral *tongues, the wonderful works of* GOD. [3]

2. In this Chapter we read, that when the Apoſtles and brethren had been praying and praiſing God, *the place was ſhaken where they were aſſembled together, and they were all filled with the* HOLY GHOST [4]. Not that we find any viſible Appearance here, ſuch as had been in the former Inſtance: Nor are we informed, that the *extraordinary Gifts* of the Holy Ghoſt were then given to all or any of them: Such as *the Gifts of Healing, of working other Miracles, of Prophecy, of diſcerning Spirits*; the ſpeaking with *divers Kinds of tongues, and the Interpretation of tongues* [5].

3. Where theſe Gifts of the HOLY GHOST were deſigned to remain in the church throughout all ages: And whether or no they will be reſtored at the nearer approach of the *Reſtitution of all things*: Are Queſtions

[1] *Acts* ii. 1, 2, 3, 4. [2] Ver. 4. [3] Ver. 6. [4] Ver. 23. [5] 1 *Cor.* xii. 9. 10.

which it is not needful to decide. But it is needful to obſerve this, that even in the Infancy of the church God divided them with a ſparing hand. *Were all* even then *Prophets?* Were *all workers of miracles? Had all the gifts of healing? Did all ſpeak with tongues?* No. In nowiſe. Perhaps not one in a thouſand. Probably none but the teachers in the Church, and only ſome of them [6]. It was therefore for a more excellent purpoſe than this, that *they were all filled with the* HOLY GHOST.

4. It was to give them (what none can deny to be eſſential to all chriſtians in all ages) *the mind which was in* CHRIST, thoſe holy *Fruits of the* SPIRIT, which whoſoever hath not, *is none of His:* To fill them with *Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs* [7]: To endue them with *Faith*, (perhaps it might be rendered, Fidelity) with *Meekneſs and Temperance:* To enable them to *crucify the Fleſh with its Affections and Luſts*, its Paſſions and Deſires: And in conſequence of that *inward change*, to fulfil all *outward* Righteouſneſs, *to walk as* CHRIST *alſo walked*, in the *Work of Faith, the Patience of Hope, the Labour of Love.* [8]

5. Without buſying ourſelves then in curious needleſs enquiries, touching thoſe *extraordinary* gifts of the Spirit; let us take a nearer view of theſe his *ordinary* Fruits, which we are aſſured will remain throughout all ages: Of that great work of God among the children of men, which we are uſed to expreſs by one word *chriſtianity:* Not as it implies a ſet of Opinions, a Syſtem of doctrines, but as it refers to mens hearts and lives. And this *Chriſtianity* it may be uſeful to conſider, under three diſtinct Views.

I. As beginning to exiſt in Individuals.

II. As ſpreading from one to another.

III. As

[6] 1 *Cor.* xii. 28, 29, 30. [7] *Gal.* v. 22, 23, 24. [8] *Theſſ.* i. 3.

III. As covering the earth. I design to close these Considerations with a plain practical Application.

I. And first, let us consider christianity in its rise, as beginning to exist in Individuals.

Suppose then one of these who heard the Apostle *Peter* preaching *repentance and remission of sins*, was *pricked to the Heart*, was convinced of Sin, repented, and then *believed in* JESUS. By this *Faith of the Operation of* GOD, which was the very *Substance* or Subsistence *of things hoped for*, the demonstrative *Evidence of invisible Things*, he instantly *received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby he* now *cried Abba, Father*[9]! Now first it was that he could *call* Jesus Lord, *by the* Holy Ghost[10], *the Spirit itself bearing witness with his Spirit that he was a child of* GOD[11]. Now it was that he could truly say, *I live not, but* CHRIST *liveth in me; and the Life which I now live in the Flesh, I live by Faith in the Son of* GOD, *who loved me and gave himself for me*[12].

2. This then was the very Essence of his Faith, a divine ἔλεγχος[13] of the Love of God the Father, through the Son of his Love, to him a sinner, now *accepted in the Beloved*. And[14] *being justified by Faith, he had Peace with* GOD, yea *the Peace of* God *ruling in his heart*: A Peace, which *passing all Understanding* (πάντα νόον, all barely rational Conception) *kept his heart and mind* from all doubt and fear, through the *Knowledge of him in whom he had believed*. He could not therefore *be afraid of any evil Tidings*; for his *Heart stood fast believing in the* LORD. He feared not what man could do unto him, knowing *the very Hairs of his Head were all numbered*. He feared not all the powers of darkness, whom God was daily *bruising under his Feet*. Least of all was he afraid to die; nay, he *desired to depart and be with* Christ[15]; who[16] *through Death had*

9 *Heb.* xi. 1. *Rom.* viii. 15. 10 1 *Cor.* xii. 3. 11 *Rom.* viii. 15. 12 *Gal.* ii. 20. 13 Evidence or Conviction. 14 *Rom.* v. 1. 15 *Phil.* i. 23. 16 *Heb.* ii. 15.

had deſtroyed him that had the Power of Death, even the Devil; and delivered them who thro' Fear of Death, were all their Life-time, till then, *ſubject to Bondage.*

3. *His Soul* therefore *magnified the* LORD, *and his Spirit rejoiced in* GOD *his Saviour. He rejoiced in him with Joy unſpeakable, who had reconciled him to* GOD *even the Father: In whom he had Redemption through his Blood, the Forgiveneſs of Sins.* He rejoiced in that *Witneſs of* GOD's *Spirit with his Spirit, that he was a Child of* GOD: And more abundantly, *in the Hope of the Glory of* GOD, in Hope of the glorious Image of God, the full *Renewal of his Soul in Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs*, and in Hope of that *Crown of Glory*, that *Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

4. *The Love of* God was alſo *ſhed abroad in his heart, by the* Holy Ghoſt *which was given unto him*[17]. *Becauſe he was a Son,* GOD *had ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into his heart, crying Abba, Father*[18]! And that filial love of God was ſtill increaſed by the *Witneſs he had in himſelf*[19], of God's pardoning Love to him, by *beholding what Manner of Love it was, which the Father had beſtowed upon him, that he ſhould be called a child of* God[20]. So that God was the deſire of his eyes and the joy of his heart! His portion in time and in eternity!

5. He that thus *loved* God, could not but *love his Brother alſo*; and *not in Word only, but in Deed and in Truth.* "*If* GOD, ſaid he, "*ſo loved us, we ought* "*alſo to love one another*[21]." Yea, every Soul of man, as the *mercy* of God *is over all his works*[22]. Agreeably hereto, the Affection of this Lover of God, embraced all Mankind for his ſake; not excepting thoſe whom he had never ſeen in the Fleſh, or thoſe of whom he knew nothing more than that they were *the*

17 *Rom.* vi. 5. 18 *Gal.* iv. 6. 19 1 *John* v. 10.
20 1 *John* iii. 1. 21 1 *John* iv. 11. 22 *Pſ.* cxlv. 9.

the Offspring of God, for whoſe Souls his Son had died: Not excepting the *evil* and *unthankful*; and leaſt of all, his enemies, thoſe who *hated, or perſecuted, or deſpitefully uſed* him for his Maſter's ſake. This had a peculiar place both in his heart and his prayers. He loved them *even as* Chriſt *loved us*.

6. And *Love is not puffed up*[23]. It abaſes to the Duſt every ſoul wherein it dwells. Accordingly he was *lowly of Heart*, little and mean and vile in his own eyes. He neither ſought nor received the *Praiſe of men, but that which cometh of* God *only*. He was meek and long-ſuffering, gentle to all, and eaſy to be intreated. Faithfulneſs and Truth never forſook him; they were *bound about his Neck, and wrote on the Table of his heart*. By the ſame Spirit he was enabled to be *temperate in all Things, refraining his ſoul even as a weaned Child*. He was *crucified to the world, and the world crucified to him*: Superior to *the Deſire of the Fleſh, the deſire of the eye, and the Pride of Life*, By the ſame Almighty Love was he ſaved, both from Paſſion and Pride, from Luſt and Vanity, from Ambition and Covetouſneſs, and from every Temper which was not in CHRIST.

7. It may be eaſily believed, he who had this love in his heart, would *work no evil to his neighbour*. It was impoſſible for him, knowingly and deſignedly, to do Harm to any Man. He was at the greateſt Diſtance from Cruelty and Wrong, from any unjuſt or unkind Action. With the ſame care did he *ſet a Watch before his Mouth, and kept the Door of his Lips*: leſt he ſhould offend in tongue, either againſt Juſtice, or againſt mercy or truth, He *put away all Lying*, Falſhood and Fraud; neither was *Guile found in his Mouth*. He *ſpake evil of no man*, nor did any unkind Word ever come out of his Lips.

8, And as he was deeply ſenſible of the Truth of that Word, *without me ye can do nothing*, and conſequently

[23] 1 *Cor.* xiii. 4.

quently, of the Need he had to be *watered* of God *every moment*, ſo he *continued daily* in all the Ordinances of God, the ſtated channels of his grace to man: *In the Apoſtle's doctrine* or Teaching, receiving that food of the ſoul with all all readineſs of heart, *in the breaking of Bread*, which he found to be *the Communion of the Body of* Chriſt, and *in the prayers* and praiſes offered up by the great congregation. And thus he *daily grew in grace*, increaſing in ſtrength, in the Knowledge and Love of God.

9. But it did not ſatisfy him, barely to abſtain from doing evil. His Soul was a-thirſt to do good. The Language of his heart continually was, *my Father worketh hitherto, and I work.* My Lord *went about doing Good:* And ſhall not I *tread in his Steps? As* he *had Opportunity* therefore, if he could do no good of a higher kind, he fed the Hungry, cloathed the Naked, help'd the Fatherleſs or Stranger, viſited and aſſiſted them that were ſick or in Priſon. He *gave all his Goods to feed the Poor*; he rejoiced to labour or to ſuffer for them; and whereinſoever he might profit another, there eſpecially to *deny himſelf.* He counted Nothing too dear to part with for them, as well remembering the word of his Lord, *Inaſmuch as ye have done it unto one of the leaſt of theſe my brethren, ye have done it unto me*[24].

10. Such was *Chriſtianity* in its riſe, ſuch was a Chriſtian in antient days. Such was every one of thoſe, who *when they heard* the threatnings of *the chief Prieſts and Elders, lift up their voice to* God *with one Accord, and were all filled with the* Holy Ghoſt. *The Multitude of them that believed, were of one heart and of one Soul.* (So did the love of Him in whom they had believed, conſtrain them to love one another.) *Neither ſaid any of them that ought of the Things which he poſſeſſed was his own; but they had all Things common.* So fully were they crucified to the world, and the world crucified

24 *Matth.* xxv. 40.

crucified to them. *And they continued ſtedfaſtly with one Accord in the Apoſtles doctrine, and in the Breaking of Bread, and in Prayers. And great Grace was upon them all, neither was there any among them that lacked: For as many as were Poſſeſſors of Lands or Houſes ſold them, and brought the Prices of Things that were ſold, and laid them down at the Apoſtles Feet, and diſtribution was made unto every Man, according as he had need.*[25]

II. Let us take a View, in the ſecond Place, of this *Chriſtianity*, as ſpreading from one to another, and ſo gradually making its Way into the world. For ſuch was the will of God concerning it: Who *did not light a Candle, to put it under a Buſhel, but that it might give Light to all in the Houſe.* And this is our Lord had declared to his firſt Diſciples; *Ye are the Salt of the Earth, the Light of the World*; at the ſame time that he gave that general Command, *Let your Light ſo ſhine before men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*[26].

2. And indeed ſuppoſing a few of theſe lovers of mankind to ſee *the whole world lying in wickedneſs*, can we believe they would be unconcerned at the ſight? At the miſery of thoſe for whom their LORD died? Would not their Bowels yearn over them, and their hearts *melt away for very trouble?* Could they then ſtand idle all the day long? Even were there no command from him whom they loved? Rather would they not labour, by all poſſible means, to *pluck* ſome of *theſe brands out of the burning?* Undoubtedly they would; They would ſpare no pains to bring back whomſoever they could of thoſe poor *ſheep that had gone aſtray, to the great ſhepherd and biſhops of their ſouls*[27].

3. So the Chriſtians of old did: They laboured, having opportunity [28], *to do good unto all men*, warning them

25 *Acts* iv. 24, 31—35.
26 *Matth.* v. 13. 14. 15. 16.
27 1 *Pet.* ii. 25.
28 *Gal.* vi. 10.

them to *flee from the wrath to come*, now, now, to escape *the damnation of hell*. They declared, [29] *The Times of ignorance* God *winked at; but now he calleth all men every where to repent.* They cried aloud, *Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; so iniquity shall not be your ruin* [30]. They [31] *reasoned* with them *of temperance and righteousness*, or justice, of the virtues opposite to their reigning sins; and *of Judgment to come*, of the wrath of God which would surely be executed on evil-doers in that day, when he should judge the World.

4 They endeavour'd herein to speak to every man severally as he had need. To the careless, to those who lay unconcerned in darkness and in the shadow of death, they thundered *Awake thou that sleepest, arise from the dead, and* Christ *shall give thee Light.* But to those who were already awakened out of sleep, and groaning under a sense of the wrath of God, their Language was, *We have an advocate with the Father; he is the propitiation for our sins.* Mean time those who had believed, they *provoked to love and to good works: to patient continuance in well doing, and to abound more and more* in that *holiness, without which no man can see the* Lord [32].

5. And their labour was not in vain in the Lord. His *word ran and was glorified.* It *grew mightily and prevailed.* But so much the more did offences prevail also. The world in general were offended, *because they testified of it, that the works thereof were evil* [33]. The Men of pleasure were offended, not only because these men were *made*, as it were, *to reprove their thoughts. (He professeth*, said they *to have the Knowledge of* God; *he calleth himself the child of the* Lord: *His life is not like other mens, his ways are of another Fashion. He abstaineth from our ways as from Filthiness; He maketh his boast that* God *is his Father* [34].) But

29 *Acts* xvii. 30. 30 *Ezek.* xviii. 30, 31 *Acts* xxiv. 25
32 *Heb.* xii. 14 33 *John* vii. 7. 34 *Wisd.* ii. 13, 14, 15, 16.

But much more, becauſe ſo many of their companions were taken away, and would no more *run with them into the ſame exceſs of Riot*[35]. The men of reputation were offended, becauſe as the goſpel ſpread, they declined in the eſteem of the people: and becauſe many no longer dared to *give them flattering titles*, or to pay man the homage due to God only. The men of trade called one another together, and ſaid, [36] *Sirs, ye know that by this Craft we have our wealth. But ye ſee and hear that theſe men have perſuaded and turned away much people. So that this our craft is in danger to be ſet at nought.* Above all the men of religion, ſo called, the men of *outſide* religion, "the Saints of the world," were offended, and ready at every Opportunity to cry out, [37] *Men of Iſrael, help! We have found theſe men Peſtilent Fellows, movers of Sedition throughout the world.* [38] *Theſe are the men that teach all men, every where, againſt the people and againſt the Law.*

6. Thus it was that the heavens grew black with Clouds, and the ſtorm gather'd amain. For the more Chriſtianity ſpread, *the more hurt was done*, in the account of thoſe who received it not. And the number increaſed of thoſe who were more and more enraged at theſe [39] *Men who* thus *turned the world upſide down.* Inſomuch that more and more cried out, *Away with ſuch fellows from the earth; it is not fit that they ſhould live*; yea, and ſincerely believed, that *whoſoever* ſhould *kill them, would do* GOD *ſervice.*

7. Mean while they did not fail to [40] *caſt out their name as evil.* So that this [41] *Sect was every where ſpoken againſt.* [42] *Men ſaid all manner of evil of them*, even as had been done of the *Prophets that were before them.* And whatever any would affirm, others would believe. So that offences grew as the ſtars of heaven for multitude. And hence aroſe, at the time fore-ordained

35 1 *Pet.* iv. 4. 36 *Acts* xix. 25, &c. 37 *Acts* xxiv. 5.
38 *Acts* xxi. 28. 39 *Acts* xvii. 6. 40 *Luke* vi. 22.
41 *Acts* xxviii. 24. 42 *Matt.* v. 11.

of the Father, perſecution in all its forms. Some, for a ſeaſon, ſuffered only ſhame and reproach; ſome, *the ſpoiling their goods*; ſome *had trial of mocking and ſcourging*; ſome *of bonds and impriſonment*; and others *reſiſted unto Blood* 43.

8. Now is was, that the Pillars of hell were ſhaken, and the kingdom of GOD ſpread more and more. Sinners were every where *turned from Darkneſs to Light, and from the power of Satan unto GOD.* He gave his children *ſuch a mouth, and ſuch wiſdom, as all their Adverſaries could not reſiſt.* And their lives were of equal force with their words. But above all, their ſuffering ſpake to all the world. They *approved themſelves* the Servants of GOD, *in afflictions, in neceſſities, in diſtreſſes; in ſtripes, in impriſonments, in tumults, in labours; in perils in the Sea, in perils in the Wilderneſs; in wearineſs and painfulneſs, in hunger and thirſt; in cold and nakedneſs* 44. And when having *fought the good fight*, they were *led as ſheep to the ſlaughter, and offered up on the ſacrifice and ſervice of their faith*, then the Blood of each found a voice, and the heathen owned, *He being dead, yet ſpeaketh.*

9. Thus did *Chriſtianity* ſpread itſelf in the Earth. But how ſoon did the Tares appear with the Wheat? And the *Myſtery of Iniquity* work as well as the *Myſtery of Godlineſs!* How ſoon did Satan find a ſeat, even *in the Temple of GOD!* Till *the Woman fled into the Wilderneſs, and the faithful were* again *miniſhed from the Children of Men.* Here we tread a beaten path: The ſtill increaſing corruptions of the ſucceeding Generations, have been lately deſcribed from time to time, by thoſe Witneſſes God raiſed up, to ſhew that he had *built his Church upon a Rock, and the gates of Hell ſhould not* wholly *prevail againſt her* 45.

III. 1, But ſhall we not ſee greater Things than theſe? Yea, greater than have been yet from the Beginning

43 *Heb.* xi. 34, xi. 36, &c.
44 2 *Cor.* vi. 4, &c.
45 *Matt.* xvi. 18.

ginning of the World? Can Satan cauſe the Truth of God to fail? Or his Promiſes to be of none Effect? If not, the time will come, when *Chriſtianity* will prevail over all, and cover the Earth. Let us ſtand a little, and ſurvey (the third thing which was propoſed) this ſtrange ſight, a *Chriſtian World*. *Of this the Prophets of old enquired and ſearched diligently*[46]: Of this *the Spirit which was in them teſtified, It ſhall come to paſs in the laſt Days, that the mountain of the* Lord's *houſe ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the top of the Mountains, and ſhall be exalted above the hills, and all nations ſhall flow unto it. And they ſhall beat their ſwords into Plough-ſhares, and their Spears into Pruning-hooks; Nation ſhall not lift up ſword againſt nation, neither ſhall they learn war any more*[47]. *In that day there ſhall be a root of* Jeſſe, *which ſhall ſtand for an Enſign of the People. To it ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his reſt ſhall be glorious. And it ſhall come to paſs in that Day, that the* Lord *ſhall ſet his hand again to recover the remnant of his People; and he ſhall ſet up an Enſign for the Nations, and ſhall aſſemble the outcaſts of* Iſrael, *and gather together the diſperſed of* Judah, *from the four corners of the earth*[48]. *The Wolf ſhall then dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lie down with the kid; And the Calf and the young Lion and the Fatling togrther; and a little child ſhall lead them. They ſhall not hurt nor deſtroy, ſaith the* Lord, *in all my holy Mountain. For the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of the* Lord, *as the Waters cover the Sea*[49].

2. To the ſame Effect are the words of the great Apoſtle, which it is evident have never yet been fulfilled. *Hath* God *caſt away his people?* God *forbid. But through their fall Salvation is come to the Gentiles. And if the diminiſhing of them be the riches of the Gentiles. how much more their fulneſs? For I would not, Brethren, that ye ſhould be ignorant of this myſtery—That Blindneſs, in part, is happened to* Iſrael, *untill the Fulneſs of the Gentiles be come in: And ſo all* Iſrael *ſhall be ſaved*[50].

46 1 Pet. i. 10, 11, &c. 47 Iſa. v. 6.——9. 48 Iſa. xi. 10, 11, 12. 49 Iſa. v. 6——9. 50 Rom. xi. 1, 11, 12, 25, 29.

3. Suppoſe now the Fulneſs of Time to be come and the Prophecies to be accompliſhed: What a Proſpect is this? All is *Peace, Quietneſs, and Aſſurance for ever.* Here is no Din of Arms, no *confuſed Noiſe*, no *Garments are rolled in blood. Deſtructions are come to a perpetual End:* Wars are ceaſed from the earth. Neither is there any inteſtine Jar remaining; no Brother riſing up againſt Brother; no Country or City divided againſt itſelf, and tearing out its own Bowels. Civil Diſcord is at an End for evermore, and none is left either to deſtroy or hurt his Neighbour. Here is no Oppreſſion to *make* even *the wiſe Man mad*; no Extortion *to grind the Face of the Poor*; no Robbery or Wrong, no Rapine or Injuſtice, for all are *content with ſuch things as they poſſeſs.* Thus *Righteouſneſs and Peace have kiſſed each other* [51], they have *taken root and filled the Land*: Righteouſneſs flouriſhing out of the earth, and *Peace looking down from Heaven.*

4. And with Righteouſneſs or Juſtice, Mercy is alſo found. The Earth is no longer *full of cruel Habitations. The* Lord *hath deſtroyed both the blood-thirſty* and malicious, the envious and revengeful man. Were there any Provocation, there is none that now knoweth, to *return evil for evil.* But indeed there is none doth evil, no not one; for all are *harmleſs as doves*; and being *filled with Peace and Joy in Believing*, and united in one body, by one Spirit, they all *love as Brethren*; they are all *of one Heart, and of one Soul. Neither ſaith any of them, that ought of the things which he poſſeſſeth is his own.* There is none among them that lacketh; for every man loveth his Neighbour as himſelf. And all walk by one Rule, *Whatever ye would that men ſhould do unto you, even ſo do unto them.*

5. It follows, that no unkind Word can ever be heard among them: No *Strife of Tongues*, no Contention of any kind, no Railing or Evil-ſpeaking: But every one *opens his Mouth with with Wiſdom, and in his Tongue there is the Law of kindneſs.* Equally incapable

[51] Pſa. lxxv. 10.

pable are they of fraud or guile: There *Love is without diſſimulation*; Their words are always the juſt Expreſſion of their thoughts, opening a window into their Breaſt, that whoſoever deſires may look into their hearts, and ſee that only love and God are there.

6. Thus, where the Lord God *omnipotent taketh to himſelf his mighty Power and reigneth*, doth he *ſubdue all Things to himſelf*, cauſe every Heart to overflow with Love, and fill their Mouth with Praiſe. *Happy are the People that are in ſuch a Caſe; yea, bleſſed are the People who have the* Lord *for their* God [10]. *Ariſe, ſhine*, (ſaith the Lord) *for thy Light is come, and the Glory of the* Lord *is riſen upon thee. Thou haſt known that I the* Lord *am thy Saviour, and thy Redeemer, the mighty* God *of* Jacob. *I have made thy Officers Peace, and thy Exactors Righteouſneſs. Violence ſhall no more be heard in thy Land, Waſting and Deſtruction within thy Borders; but thou ſhalt call thy Walls Salvation, and thy Gates Praiſe. Thy People are all righteous; they ſhall inherit the Land for ever: The Branch of my Planting, the Work of my hands, that I may be glorified. The Sun ſhall be no more thy Light by Day; neither for brightneſs ſhall the Moon give Light unto thee. But the* Lord *ſhall be unto thee an everlaſting light, and thy* God *thy* Glory [11].

IV. Having thus briefly conſidered *Chriſtianity*, as beginning, as going on, and as covering the Earth, it remains only that I ſhould cloſe the whole with a plain practical Application.

1. And firſt, I would aſk, Where does this *Chriſtianity* now exiſt? Where, I pray, do the *Chriſtians* live? Which is the Country, the Inhabitaats whereof are *all* thus *filled with the* Holy Ghoſt? Are *all of one Heart and of one Soul?* Cannot ſuffer one among them *to lack any Thing*, but continually give *to every Man as he hath Need?* Who, one and all, have the Love of God filling their Hearts, and conſtraining

10 Pſal. cxliv. 15. 11 Iſa lx. 1, 16, 19.

ſtraning them to love their Neighbour as themſelves? Who have all *put on Bowels of Mercies, Humbleneſs of Mind, Gentleneſs, Long-ſuffering?* Who offend not in any Kind, either by Word or Deed, againſt Juſtice, Mercy, or Truth? But in every Point do unto all Men, as they would theſe ſhould do unto them? With what propriety can we term any a *Chriſtian Country* which does not anſwer this Deſcription? Why then let us confeſs we have never yet ſeen a *Chriſtian Country* upon Earth.

2. I beſeech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, if ye do account *me* a madman or a fool, yet *as a Fool bear with me.* It is utterly needful that ſome one ſhould uſe great plainneſs of Speech toward you. It is more eſpecially needful at *this* Time; for who knoweth but it is the *laſt?* Who knoweth how ſoon the Righteous Judge may ſay, I *will no more be intreated for this People. Tho'* Noah, Daniel, *and* Job *were in this Land, they ſhould but deliver their own Souls.* And who will uſe this plainneſs if I do not? Therefore I, even I, will ſpeak. And I adjure you, by the Living God, that ye ſteel not your Breaſts againſt receiving a Bleſſing at *my* Hands. Do not ſay in your Heart, *Non perſuadebis, etiamſi perſuaſeris.* Or in other Words, Lord, thou ſhalt not *ſend, by whom thou wilt ſend!* Let me rather periſh in my Blood, than be ſaved by this man!

3. *Brethren, I am perſuaded better Things of you, tho' I thus ſpeak.* Let me aſk you then, in tender Love, and in the Spirit of Meekneſs, Is this City a *Chriſtian* City? Is *Chriſtianity, Scriptural Chriſtianity,* found here? Are we, conſidered as a Community of men, ſo *filled with the* HOLY GHOST, as to enjoy in our Hearts, and ſhew forth in our Lives, the genuine Fruits of the Spirit? Are all the Magiſtrates, all Heads and Governors of Colleges and Halls, and their reſpective Societies (not to ſpeak of the Inhabitants of the Town) *of one Heart and of one Soul?* Is *the Love of* GOD *ſhed abroad in our Hearts?* Are our Tempers the ſame that were in Him? And are our Lives agreeable

agreeable thereto? Are we *holy as he which hath called us is holy, in all manner of converſation?*

4. I intreat you to obſerve, that here are no *peculiar Notions* now under Conſideration; that the Queſtion moved is not concerning *doubtful Opinions*, of one Kind or another: But concerning the undoubted, fundamental Branches (if there be any ſuch) of our *common Chriſtianity*. And for the deciſion thereof, I appeal to your own Conſcience guided by the Word of God. He therefore that is not condemned by his own Heart, let him go free.

5. In the Fear then, and in the Preſence of the Great GOD, before whom both you and I ſhall ſhortly appear, I pray you that are in Authority over us, whom I reverence for your Office Sake, to conſider, (and not after the manner of Diſſemblers with God) are You *filled with the* HOLY GHOST? Are ye lively Portraitures of Him, whom ye are appointed to repreſent among Men? *I have ſaid, Ye are Gods*, ye Magiſtrates and Rulers; ye are by Office ſo nearly allied to the God of Heaven! In your ſeveral Stations and Degrees, ye are to ſhew forth unto us the Lord *our Governor*. Are all the Thoughts of your Hearts, all your Tempers and Deſires, ſuitable to your High Calling? Are all your words like unto thoſe which come out of the mouth of God? Is there in all your Actions Dignity and Love? A greatneſs which words cannot expreſs, which can flow only from an Heart full of God——and yet conſiſtent with the Character of *Man that is a worm, and the Son of Man that is a Worm!*

6. Ye venerable men, who are more eſpecially called to form the tender Minds of Youth, to diſpel thence the ſhades of Ignorance and Error, and train them up to be wiſe unto Salvation, are You *filled with the* HOLY GHOST? With all thoſe *Fruits of the* SPIRIT, which your important office ſo indiſpenſably requires? Is your Heart whole with God? Full of Love and Zeal

Zeal to ſet up his Kingdom on Earth? Do you continually remind thoſe under your care, that the one Rational End of all our Studies, is to know, love and ſerve *the only true* God, *and* Jeſus Chriſt *whom he hath ſent?* Do you inculcate upon them, Day by Day, that *Love* alone *never faileth?* Whereas, *whether there be Tongues, they ſhall fail, or* Philoſophical *Knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away:* And that without Love, all Learning is but ſplendid Ignorance, pompous Folly, Vexation of Spirit? Has all you teach an actual Tendency to the Love of God, and of all Mankind for his Sake? Have you an Eye to this End in whatever you preſcribe, touching the Kind, the Manner, and the Meaſure of their Studies? Deſiring and labouring, that wherever the Lot of theſe young Soldiers of Chriſt is caſt, they may be ſo many *burning and ſhining Lights, adorning the Goſpel of* CHRIST in all Things? And permit me to aſk, Do you put forth all your Strength, in the vaſt work you have undertaken? Do you labour herein with all your Might? Exerting every Faculty of your Soul? Uſing every Talent which God hath lent you, and that to the uttermoſt of your Power?

7. Let it not be ſaid, that I ſpeak, as if all under your Care were intended to be Clergymen: Not ſo: I only ſpeak as if they were all intended to be Chriſtians. But what example is ſet them by us who enjoy the Beneficence of our Fore-fathers? By Fellows Students, Scholars? More eſpecially thoſe who are of ſome Rank and Eminence? Do ye, brethren, abound in the Fruits of the Spirit? In Lowlineſs of Mind, in Self-denial and Mortification, in Scriouſneſs and Compoſure of Spirit, in Patience, Meekneſs, Sobriety, Temperance: and in unwearied, reſtleſs Endeavours, to do Good, in every kind, unto all men, to relieve their outward wants, and to bring their Souls to the true Knowledge and Love of God? Is this the general Character of Fellows of Colleges? I fear it is not. Rather, Have not Pride and Haughtineſs of Spirit, Impatience and Peeviſhneſs, Sloth, and Indolence, Gluttony

Gluttony and Senſuality, and even a proverbial Uſeleſneſs, been objected to us, *perhaps* not always by our Enemies, nor *wholly* without ground? O that God would roll away this reproach from us! that the very memory of it might periſh for ever!

8 Many of us are more immediately conſecrated to God, called to *miniſter in holy things*. Are we then Patterns to the reſt? *In Word, in Converſation, in Charity; in Spirit, in Faith, in Purity* [54]? Is there written on our Forehead and on our heart, *Holineſs to the Lord*? From what motives did we enter upon this Office? Was it indeed with a ſingle Eye *to ſerve* GOD? *Truſting that we were inwardly moved by the* Holy Ghoſt *to take upon us this miniſtration, for the promoting of his glory, and the edifying of his people*? And *have* we *clearly determined, by* God's *grace, to give ourſelves wholly to this Office*? *Do we forſake and ſet aſide, as much as in us lies, all worldly cares and ſtudies*? *Do we apply ourſelves wholly to this one thing*? *And draw all our cares and ſtudies this way*? Are we *apt to teach*? Are we *taught of* God, that we may be able to teach others alſo? Do we know God? Do we know Jeſus Chriſt? Hath God *revealed his Son in us*? And hath he *made us able miniſters of the New Covenant*? Where then are *the Seals of our Apoſtleſhip*? Who *that were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins* have been quickened by our Word? Have we a burning zeal to ſave ſouls from death?—So that for their ſake we often forget even to eat our bread? Do we ſpeak plain? *By manifeſtation of the truth commending ourſelves to every man's conſcience in the ſight of God* [55]? Are we dead to the world and the things of the world, *laying up all our treaſure in heaven*? *Do we lord it over* God's *heritage*? Or are we the leaſt, the *ſervants of all*? When we bear the reproach of Chriſt, does it ſit heavy upon us, or do we rejoice therein? When we are *ſmitten on the one* Cheek, do we reſent it? Are we impatient of affronts? Or do we

turn

[54] 1 Tim. iv. 12. [55] 2 Cor. iv. 2.

turn the other alſo, not reſiſting the evil, but *overcoming Evil with good?* Have we a bitter zeal, inciting us to ſtrive ſharply and paſſionately with them that are *out of the way?* Or is our Zeal the flame of Love? So as to direct all our Words with Sweetneſs, Lowlineſs and Meekneſs of Wiſdom?

9. Once more: What ſhall we ſay concerning the Youth of this Place? Have *you* either the Form or the Power of *Chriſtian* Godlineſs? Are you humble, teachable, adviſeable; or ſtubborn, ſelf-willed, heady and high-minded? Are you obedient to your Superiors as to Parents; or do you deſpiſe thoſe to whom you owe the tendereſt reverence? Are you diligent in your eaſy buſineſs? purſuing your ſtudies with all your ſtrength? Do you *redeem the time*, crowding as much Work into every day as it can contain? Rather, are ye not conſcious to yourſelves, that you waſte away day after day, either in reading what has no tendency to *Chriſtianity*, or in gaming, or in —— you know what? Are you better managers of your Fortune than of your time? Do you out of Principle, take care to *owe no man any thing?* Do you *remember the Sabbath-Day, to keep it holy*: to ſpend it in the more immediate worſhip of God? When you are in his Houſe, do you conſider that God is there? Do you behave, *as ſeeing him that is inviſible?* Do you know how to *poſſeſs your Bodies in Sanctification and Honour?* Are not Drunkenneſs and Uncleanneſs found among you? Yea, are there not of you, who *glory in their Shame?* Do not many of you *take the Name of* God *in vain*: Perhaps habitually, without either Remorſe or Fear? Yea, are there not a Multitude of you that are Forſworn? I fear, a ſwiftly increaſing Multitude. Be not ſurprized, Brethren; before God and this Congregation, I own myſelf to have been of that number: Solemnly ſwearing to *obſerve all thoſe Cuſtoms*, which I then knew nothing of; *and thoſe Statutes*, which I did not ſo much as read over, either then, or for ſome Years

Years after? What is Perjury, if this is not? But if it be, O what a Weight of Sin, yea Sin of no common Eye, lieth upon us! And doth not *the Moſt High* regard it?

19. May it not be one of the Conſequences of this, that ſo many of you are a generation of *Triflers*; triflers with God, with one another, and with your own Souls? For how few of you ſpend from one week to another, a ſingle hour in private prayer? How few, have any thought of God, in the general tenor of your converſation? Who of you is in any degree acquainted with the work of his Spirit? His ſupernatural work in the Souls of men? Can you bear, unleſs now and then, in a church, any talk of the HOLY GHOST? Would you not take it for granted, if one began ſuch a Converſation, that it was either *Hypocriſy* or *Enthuſiaſm*? In the Name of the Lord God Almighty, I aſk what Religion are *you* of? Even the talk of *Chriſtianity* ye cannot, will not bear? O my Brethren! What a *Chriſtian* City is this? *It is time for thee*, Lord, *to lay to thine Hand!*

11. For indeed, what Probability, what Poſſibility rather, (ſpeaking after the manner of Men) is there that *Chriſtianity*, *ſcriptural Chriſtianity*, ſhould be again the Religion of this Place? That all Orders of Men among us ſhould ſpeak and live, as Men *filled with the* Holy Ghoſt? By whom ſhould this *Chriſtianity* be reſtored? By thoſe of you who are in Authority? Are you convinced then, that this is *Scriptural Chriſtianity*? Are ye deſirous it ſhould be reſtored? And do ye not count your Fortune, Liberty, Life, dear unto yourſelves, ſo ye may be inſtrumental in the reſtoring it? But ſuppoſe ye have this Deſire, who hath the Power proportionable to the Effect? Perhaps ſome of you have made a few Attempts: But, with how ſmall Succeſs! Shall *Chriſtianity* then be reſtored by young, unknown, inconſiderable Men? I know not, whether ye yourſelves could ſuffer it: Would not ſome of you

cry

cry out, " Young Man! in ſo doing thou reproach
us!" But there is no danger of your being put to t
proof; ſo hath *Iniquity overſpread us like a Flood*
Whom then ſhall God ſend? The Famine, the Peſ
lence? (The laſt Meſſengers of God to a guilty Lan
or the Sword? *The Armies of the* Romiſh *Aliens*, to r
form us into our firſt Love? Nay, *rather let us f*
into thy Hands O Lord, *and let us not fall into the hands*
men.

Lord, ſave or we periſh! Take us out of the mir
that we ſink not! O help us againſt theſe Enemie
For vain is the Help of Man. Unto Thee all thin
are poſſible. According to the greatneſs of thy pow
er, preſerve thou thoſe that are appointed to di
And preſerve us in the manner as ſeemeſt thee goo
Not as we will, but as thou wilt!

FINIS